CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. An integrated circuit (IC) comprising:

a plurality of functional units selectively communicating with each other;

a plurality of logic circuits connected together in ones of said plurality of functional units, connected said logic circuits in each of said ones defining function therein;

selectable supply switching devices disposed at ones of said logic circuits selectively supplying power and alternately isolating connected said logic circuits, said selectable supply switching devices turning on at a threshold voltage having a magnitude greater than like devices is said logic circuits; and

a switchable bias supply at each selectable supply switching device selectively reducing threshold voltage magnitude responsive to said each selectable supply switching device supplying power.

2. An IC as in claim 1, wherein said devices are field effect transistors (FETs), ones of said selectable supply switching devices are p-type FETs (PFETs) connected between a supply line (V_{dd}) and an intermediate supply line.

3. An IC as in claim 2, wherein whenever ones of said selectable supply switching devices are supplying power to said connected logic circuits, said switchable bias supply at said ones provides a body bias of $V_{dd} - 0.7V$ to said one.

4. An IC as in claim 3, wherein whenever ones of said selectable supply switching devices are isolating said connected logic circuits, said switchable bias supply at said ones provides a body bias of V_{dd} to said one, whereby leakage current in and off said one

is substantially reduced with said body bias of V_{dd} over said off ones with body bias at $V_{dd} - 0.7V$.

5. An IC as in claim 2, wherein at least one said intermediate supply line is connected to two or more of said logic circuits.

6. An IC as in claim 2, further comprising a decoupling capacitor at each said intermediate supply line.

7. An integrated circuit (IC) comprising:

a plurality of functional units selectively communicating with each other;

a plurality of logic circuits connected together in each of said plurality of functional units, connected said logic circuits in each functional unit defining function in said each unit; and

selectable supply switching devices disposed at ones of said logic circuits selectively alternately supplying power and isolating connected said logic circuits, said selectable supply switching devices being a high threshold device turning on at a threshold voltage having a magnitude greater than at least one like devices is said logic circuits, each said of selectable supply switching devices being one in a series of stacked high threshold devices.

8. An IC as in claim 7, wherein said devices are field effect transistors (FETs), ones of said selectable supply switching devices are p-type FETs (PFETs) connected between a supply line (V_{dd}) and an intermediate supply line.

9. An IC as in claim 8, wherein said selectable supply switching PFETs are each one of a pair series of stacked said high threshold PFETs, one of each of said pairs being connected to V_{dd} and the other of said pair being connected to said intermediate supply line.

10. An IC as in claim 9, wherein at least one said intermediate supply line is connected to two or more of said logic circuits.

11. An IC as in claim 8, further comprising a decoupling capacitor at each said intermediate supply line.

12. An IC as in claim 8, wherein remaining ones of said selectable supply switching devices are n-type FETs (PFETs) connected between a supply return line (Gnd) and an intermediate return line.

14. An IC as in claim 12, wherein said series stacked said high threshold devices comprises:

a plurality of high threshold PFET pairs, a first PFET of each of said PFET pairs being connected between V_{dd} and said intermediate supply line; and

a plurality of high threshold NFET pairs, a first NFET of each of said pairs being connected between Gnd and said intermediate return line.

15. An IC as in claim 14, wherein ones of said first PFET are paired with a plurality of second PFETs.

16. An IC as in claim 14, wherein ones of said first NFET are paired with a plurality of second NFETs.

17. An IC as in claim 14, wherein a second PFET of said plurality of high threshold PFET pairs is a logic circuit PFET in one first supply switched logic circuit and a second NFET of said plurality of high threshold pairs is a logic circuit NFET in one second supply switched logic circuit.

18. An IC as in claim 17, wherein a logic path in at least one of said plurality of functional units comprises alternating first supply switched logic circuits and second supply switched logic circuits.

19. An IC as in claim 7, wherein said devices are field effect transistors (FETs), ones of said selectable supply switching devices are n-type FETs (NFETs) connected between a supply return line (Gnd) and an intermediate return line.

20. An IC as in claim 19, wherein said selectable supply switching NFETs are each one of a pair series of stacked said high threshold NFETs, one of each of said pairs being connected to Gnd and the other of said pair being connected to said intermediate return line.

21. An IC as in claim 20, wherein at least one said intermediate return line is connected to two or more of said logic circuits.

22. An IC as in claim 19, further comprising a decoupling capacitor at each said intermediate supply line.

23. An IC as in claim 7, wherein series of stacked said high threshold devices are tapered widest to narrowest with the widest said high threshold devices being disposed in said series nearest to a logic circuit output and the narrowest at supply connections.

24. An IC as in claim 23, wherein tapered said series of stacked high threshold devices have a taper ratio of 4, each said high threshold devices in said tapered series being 4 times wider than its next adjacent narrower stacked said device.

25. An IC as in claim 24, wherein said tapered series of stacked high threshold devices comprises 2 said high threshold devices.

26. A method of designing a series of stacked high threshold devices for reducing circuit leakage, said method comprising the steps of:

a) selecting an equivalent device width;

b) determining stack height reduction of leakage for a number of stack heights;

c) determining leakage for each of a number of taper ratios, circuit leakage being determined by said stack height and taper ratio;

d) determining an delay adder for each of said number of taper ratios;

e) determining a circuit wake up time for each of said number of taper ratios, circuit delay being determined by said delay adder and wakeup time; and

f) selecting an optimum stack height and an optimum taper ratio to minimize circuit leakage and circuit delay.

27. A method as in claim 26, before the step (f) of said optimum stack height and said optimum taper ratio, said method further comprising the steps of:

e1) determining an intermediate supply bounce for each of said number of taper ratios, said intermediate supply bounce affecting circuit delay; and

e2) determining an in-stack off voltage for each of said number of taper ratios, said in-stack off voltage affecting circuit leakage.

28. A method as in claim 27, wherein the step (f) comprising empirically relating circuit leakage and circuit delay to said equivalent device width (W), stack height (N) and taper ratio (T).

29. A method as in claim 28, wherein empirically relating circuit leakage and circuit delay has the form:

$t_{delay} = (t_0 - N/a - W/b)(1 - T/c)$ and

$P_{standby} = (k_0 + k_1 \exp(-N^2))\,(W/2)^d (j_0 + \exp(-T))$, where a, b, c, d, k_0, k_1 and j_0 are process dependent coefficients and t0 is the delay with a single header/footer device.